



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

FORMS OF ASSEVERATIVE AND ADJURATIVE PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES IN OLD FRENCH¹

BY OLIVER TOWLES

In invocations of objects of love and reverence for the purpose of emphasizing speech, the two fundamental principles that seem to be involved are (a) that the object invoked will aid in proving the sincerity of the utterance, (b) that the agent will be punished by or through the object invoked, if he speaks falsely or fails to act as stated. The simplest forms of these two kinds of invocation are *si m'ait dieu* and *le diable m'emporte si*, etc. We are not here concerned with either of the above forms of invocation, but with the invocation of objects of love and reverence by means of a phrase consisting of an introductory preposition plus the name of the object invoked. In this form of invocation also the ideas of entreaty for aid and imprecation seem to be the emphasizing principles.

The normal objects of invocation in both asseverative and adjurative invocations may be divided into two classes, religious objects and objects pertaining to the speaker, the person addressed and the person referred to. In the first case the invocation is equivalent to a prayer for supernatural aid in attesting the sincerity of the utterance emphasized; in the second the invocation is fundamentally an imprecation upon the beloved object in case of insincerity.

The prepositional phrases under consideration occur in two forms of invocation, asseverative and adjurative. The asseverative invocation properly qualifies statements of fact and intention, attesting parenthetically the truth of these statements by reference to the object invoked, so *par dieu je l'ai fait* (—*le fais*,—*le ferai*). Adjurative invocations qualify commands, requests and questions, and are demands that the person addressed shall speak or act as stated in so far as he holds in reverence, or fears for, the object named, so *pour dieu faites-le* (*que faites-vous?*).

¹ This study is a product of work done for my dissertation which is now being published by the Librairie Ancienne Honoré Champion, Paris. I have thought it well to group together here certain facts regarding the form and syntax of prepositional phrases of invocation which, if mentioned in the dissertation, are scattered through the volume.

FORMS OF ASSEVERATION

Phrases introduced by *par*.

Phrases with *par* form by far the most common class of asseverations. They are in frequent employment in all forms of literature throughout the period covered by this study. In works of religious character their use is confined to very serious context.

These phrases are employed to qualify statements of fact in past, present and future time:

Mes par dieu . . . Onques encor jour de ma vie, Ne li requis je vilenie, Ren., xvi, 786.—*Par Dieu, s'il iert de tous li pire, S'est ele o lui par foi plevie*, Escoufle, 3926.—*As-tu ma teste? Oil, par dé*, Fl. u. Bl., 818.—*Par dieu non est*, Th. fr. av. la Ren., 166.—*par mon createur, Je suis son serviteur*, Chans. du XVe S., 100.—*Par Deu, se tu i vais, Tu n'en retourneras ja mais*, Thèbes, 1203.—*Par le corps bieu, rien n'en sera*, Rec. de Farces, 18.

They are often employed interjectionally to accompany expressions of emotion:

Par Deu, sire, ce est la pure, Trop seroit laide chose, Ren. x, 174.—*Par Deu, . . . danz gloz, vos i mentez*, Orenge, 609.—*par deu . . . çou est grant mal*, Fl. u. Bl., 681.—*Par la chair, ie renye, ie renonce. Il m'eschappe*, Rab. II, 175.—*par toz les sains d'Orliens. C'est une grue grant et belle*, Fabl., v, 152.

Phrases introduced by *sur*.

Forms of asseveration with this preposition appear commonly for the first time in the fifteenth century. Occasional examples of phrases with *sur* plus an object of invocation qualifying a declarative expression (*dire, afier, plevir*, etc.) are found before this time.

Ore jurez tuz sur cest escrit, Th. fr. au moy. a., 19.—*sus ma foi vos affi*, Doon, 777.—*Ge vos plevis sor Dieu*, Orenge, 1380.—etc.

My earliest examples of *sur* phrases in independent asseverative function are from the Miracles de Nostre-Dame par personnages and Eustache Deschamps.² In the fifteenth century the asseveration becomes frequent, particularly in literature of the court.³ In the sixteenth century occurrences are less numerous.

² Mir. de N.-D., xxvi, 741; ib., II, 181; Eust. Desch., I, 170.

³ Rondeaux, xxvii, xxxi, xlvi, lxxiii, lxxxvii, cxi; Chans. du XVe S., 19, 35, 37, 91; Rec. Poés. Fr., iv, 10, 5; ib., xii, 200; Mem. rel. à l'hist. de Fr., iv, 491, 492, 494, etc.

All forms of asseverative utterances may be qualified by phrases with *sur*. They do not apparently occur in interjectional use, however, and are much rarer than the *par* phrases in emotional context. The object invoked is rarely a religious object.⁴

Ce ne feray-je sur mon ame, Rec. de Farces, 40.—*Sur ma foy, il est bon*, Rec. Gén. Sot., II, 338.—*et vous en trouverez bien sur ma foy*, Rab., I, 384.—*J'euz a l'eure, sur mon ame, Le cuer plus fier qu'ung lyon*, Chans. du XV^e S., 19.—*Sur mon ame, vey bon moust*, Mist., I, 248.

Phrases introduced by *en*.

Phrases of asseveration with *en* are relatively rare with the exception of the one form *en nom dieu*.⁵ We have found scattered cases of the forms *en nom de moi*,⁶ *en foi*,⁷ and *en ma foi*.⁸ These forms are largely confined to the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

The phrases with *en* are all unemphatic means of asseveration. In most cases they accompany the answers to questions or introduce the words of a speaker or messenger; they are often used as hails:

En nom Dieu . . . Viez sui et freiles Aym. Narb., 564.—*Amis, dist il, ou est tes sire alez? Et cil respont: A la cort, en nom Dé*, Gayd., 374.—*Marote, veus tu plus de mi? O je, en nom Dieu*, Rob. et Mar., 680.—*en nom de moy, D'or feray faire ton ymage*, Mir. de N.-D., XXI, 1368.—*En moie foi, oil*, RCambr., 8269.—*en moie foi, l'otroi*, Ren., XXI, 25.—*Combien as gent por guere commencer? En nom Dieu, dame, bien seront x milliers*, RCambr., 1037.—*Hervieu a appelle Kallemaine au vis fier: En non Dieu, enperere, bien me devés aidier*, GNant., 1224.—*Au sor G. l'est on alés noncier Dedans Aras en son palais plaignier. En nom Dieu, sire, or vait a l'anpirier*, RCambr., 8569.

Phrases introduced by *à*.

This preposition introduces asseverative invocations only in the two forms *à foi* and *à ma foi*. These forms have not been found outside of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Their asseverative function is very weak. The phrase *à foi* occurs generally modifying a wish or imprecation:

A feit, ço dist li reis, trop i ont grant huntage, Karls R., 659.—*A foi, dist ele, Mahom te puis grever*, HBord., 7533.—*Daez ait Clarembaus et quan-*

⁴ See *Sur le Dieu seulement que je croy*, Rondeaux, CXI.

⁵ See my Dissertation, p. 32 ff.

⁶ Ruteb., I, 90; Mir. de N.-D., XIX, 386, 985; fb., XXI, 1368.

⁷ Erec, 2594.

⁸ See Dissertation, p. 127.

qu'il a mandé, Et tu a foi si aies quant tu l'as aporté, Par. Duch., 2282.—*A moie foi, ge non*, Aye, 936.—*Escuiers, qui l'ocit? A la moie foi, sire, damoisiaus de pris*, Floov., 1024.

FORMS OF ADJURATION

Phrases introduced by *pour*.

This form of adjuration is found in all types of literature down to the fifteenth century. It is common in the earliest monuments, in the Roland and in later religious texts, such as the Miracles de Nostre Dame par personnages, where *par* plus a religious object in asseveration is rare. With the fifteenth century this form ceases to be used except in the phrases *pour dieu*, *pour l'amour de dieu* and *pour dieu merci*.

The original function of this, as of other phrases of adjuration, was to emphasize expressions of prayer, request, demand, etc.:

Dame, aie, Por le cuer, GCoins., 171.—*Merci, Guillelmes, por sainte charité*, Cor. Lo., 1394.—*Je luy commande, je luy prie, Pour Dieu et sa mere Marie, Qu'il ne hante que gens de bien*, Rec. de Poës. Fr., x, 136.—*por Dieu, si te devroies taire: Ne dois pas parler contre moi*, Fabl., I, 3.

Their most frequent use is to qualify an imperative of request or command:

Quer me herbergez por Deu en ta maison, Alex., XLIV.—*Or esgardez, por Dieu*, Fabl., I, 2.—*Por amor Dieu . . . N'i aiez mie*, Li. Nerb., 4525.—*Or tost apres, por Deu le rei Jesu*, Cor. Lo., 1204.—*Belot, va t'en, pour saint Jehan, Chiez mon seigneur ysnel le pas*, Mir. le N.-D., III, 270.—*Pour Dieu, faictes-en bonne garde*, Rondeaux, CLXIV.—*Donez, pour Dieu, du pain aus freres*, Ruteb., II, 17.

Often the imperative must be supplied:

Dame, pour la vertu divine, Qu'estes-vous?, Mir. de N.-D., XXIII, 1201.—*Comant, por Deu, sont il dono troi?*, Ch. Lyon, 3615.—*Por le cuer be, quez mautalent T'a fait devenir pelerin*, Ren., VIII, 246.—*Qui, por saint Jake, est il donques?*, Escoufle, 6230.—*Qu'en puis je, pour la trinité?*, Mir. de N.-D., XXXI, 522.

In occasional examples the *pour* phrases are employed interjectionally, without direct connection with the accompanying sentence. Their value in such instances might be rendered by "Please do," "Please do not," "Can this be true?":

A husband announces a distant trip. His wife answers: *Hé, sire, pour le roy de gloire, Pruce est un pais moult lointain*, Mir. de N.-D., XII, 7.—

A Princess accuses Jean Chrysostom of being the father of her illegitimate child. The Queen-Mother exclaims: *Jehan? Pour sainte trinité. Je le cuiday au plus preud homme*, Mir. de N.-D., VI, 539.—*Qu'es-ce? Qu'avez-vous, Theophile? Por le grant Dé! quel mautalent!*, Ruteb., II, 230.—*Or vueil je le treske mener. Voire, pour Dieu, mes amis dous*, Rob. et Mar., 772.—*Ha! ma dame, pour Dieu mercy, la mort, La mort, la mort mille fois la journee*, Rec. de Poés. Fr., IV, 179.

Phrases with *par* plus an object pertaining to the person addressed.

These forms occur commonly throughout the period under examination. The phrase is in the nature of an imprecation; the speaker demands that the person addressed act as directed if he hold dear the object mentioned. It is employed with special frequency in address between persons of different religions.

The function of these forms is the same as that of other adjurative phrases. Owing to their imprecative value their use is very emphatic; they frequently accompany positive commands:

Di moi, par l'ame, Cest ymage de qui est ele?, GCoins., 424.—*Vassal, dist l'amirais, or me di, par ta vie*, Fier., 2640.—*Quel gent sont cil de France, di par ta laiouté*, Fier., 2896.—*Or me di par l'arme ton pere*, Fabl., v, 152.—*Sarrasins, frere, par la loi dont tu vis, De quel lignage es-tu?*, Otin., 231.—*Par vostre foy? Voyre vraiment*, Rec. de Far., Mor., etc., IV, 14, 4.—*Mais qu'en ditz tu, par ton serment*, Rec. Gén. Sot., I, 166.—*Oeuvre moi cele porte, par le tien cieſ*, Aiol, 2819.—*Par cele loi que vos tenez plus salve, Gardez, de nos ne turnez le curage*, Rol., 648.—*Si feras par l'ame de toi*, Ren., XI, 1284.—*Seigneurs, vueilliez me vos secrets Descouvrir chascun, par vostre ame*, Mir. de N.-D., XXXIV, 274.

The confusion of the two forms of adjuration *pour* plus a religious object and *par* plus a personal attribute of the person addressed is found in *De meie part l'empereor direiz: Pur le soen deu, qu'il ait mercit de mei*, Rol., 81.

Phrases introduced by *de par*.⁹

The most frequently employed forms of this adjuration are *de par dieu* and *de par le diable* (*les diables, tous les diables*). Other forms occur in sporadic instances: *de par Dame-Dieu*,¹⁰ *de par notre seigneur*,¹¹ *de par le roi Jésus*,¹² *de par notre Dieu*,¹³ *de par*

⁹ Derived from *de parte*; see Dissertation, p. 14.

¹⁰ Fabl., II, 43.

¹² Li Nerb., 6666.

¹¹ Th. Fr. av. la Ren., 67.

¹³ Th. Fr. av. la Ren., 153.

la trinite,¹⁴ etc. The object invoked is almost invariably religious. With the exception of *de par le diable*, etc., which has not been found before the fourteenth century, these forms occur throughout the period under examination.

As other adjurative phrases, the *de par* adjurations are normally employed to modify imperatives of command and request and questions:

Alons, dist li chens, de par dé, Ren., XIII, 1185.—*Rois, va an essil, De par Dieu*, Guil. d'A., 83.—*Armez vos tost, de par le roi Jesu*, Li Nerb., 6666.—*Taisez-vous, de par tous les dyables*, Th. Fr. av. la Ren., 186.—*Or mouvons, de par Dieu*, Mir., de N.-D., XXIII, 1416.—*De par diu, car me dîtes ore*, Ch. ii esp., 3694.—*J'en buray, va, de par Dieu, va*, Mist., I, 248.

The *de par* phrases are found in interjectional use more frequently than any other adjurative forms. The phrase often may be rendered "Go ahead," "Do so," "Take heart," or "Please." Note the frequent presence of *or*, *ça*, or *or ça*, indicating the imperatival nature of the expression:

Et demain a vous revenray Bien matinét. De par Dieu! je seray tout prest, Mir. de N.-D., XIX, 206.—*Aler vueil aval la maison, Quar savoir vueil, s'il i a ame. De par Dieu, sire, dist la dame*, Fabl., IV, 101.—*Et hay, de par le dyable, hay! Tout aussi bien vous yrez*, Th. Fr. av. la Ren., 153.—*Tu poises autant comme uns blos! Or de par Dieu*, Rob. et Mar., 555.—*Mais je le vos conterai, se vos volés. De par diu, fait Aucassins, encor aim je mix conter que nient*, Auc., 22, 24.—*Or de par dieu, respondiz ie, si iavoys Sphynx en ma maison, or de par dieu, comme l'avoyt Verres, ung de voz precurseurs, or de par dieu*, Rab., III, 49-50.

Examples are not uncommon in which the *de par* phrases are used with asseverative context. We are led to suppose that there was at times a confusion between *de par* and *par* in the minds of the people. Such employment is, however, distinctly exceptional:

De par Dé, en aussi bon poinct Que le bailliez, le vous rendray, Mir. de N.-D., v, 697.—*Se loing en estes, de par Dieu, Par aventure vous avez Des amis que pas ne savez Bien pres de vous*, ib., XXIX, 714.—*Et je le grant, de par dé*, Fabl., IV, 129.—*Je l'otri, de par Dé*, MAYm, 2403.—*Amis, de par le saint Esprit, Toz tes voloirs vueil acomplir*, Fabl., v, 72.—*Volés de chou oir le droit? . . . Voire bien, de par Dame-Diu*, ib., II, 43.—*Je suis la Goutte, de par Dieu*, Rec. de Poés. Fr., IV, 263.—*De par Dieu, ce n'est pas bien dit*, Rondeaux, CLXI.—*Et ouy, de par tous les diables, respondit-il, mais je n'y ai riens*, Mem. rel. à hist de Fr., IV, 519.—(*crier*) . . . *que de par le deable c'estoit monsieur*, Sept Sages, 20.

¹⁴ Mir. de N.-D., VII, 22.

Phrases introduced by *en*.

Adjurative phrases with *en* occur most frequently in the form *el* (*en*, *ou*, *o*) *nom de Dieu*; other forms are found only in sporadic instances. It is surprising that *el nom de Dieu* should be used commonly¹⁵ in adjurative function whereas *en nom dieu* is always asseverative:

Biaus sire, El nom de Dieu . . . Oeste fame ne saisissiez, Fabl., I, 176.—*En nom de Dieu, vueilliés moy pardonner*, Chans. du XV^e S., 56.—*marshons ou nom de Dieu*, Mem. rel. à l'hist. de Fr., IV, 566.—*Or del bien faire, el nom sainte Marie*, Aiol, 10861.—*issez en nom saint Esprit*, Gar. Loh., I, 105.—*prenez cel enfant En l'honneur du biau roy puissant*, Mir. de N.-D., I, 405.

Phrases introduced by *à*.

This preposition is not frequent in adjurative phrases. Such examples as occur are from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries:

Or entendez, au nom de Dieu, Rec. de Poës. Fr., I, 46.—*Ne nous vueilles pas adresser A leurs mains*, Rec. de Farces, Mor., etc., II, 13, 8.—*A Vonneur monseigneur saint Fiacre, Faites moy quelque cherité*, Rec. Gén. Sot., I, 7.

Asseverative and adjurative phrases without introductory prepositions.

From the earliest period the phrases *foi que je dois*— and *foi que vous devez*— are found in asseveration and adjuration. These forms have been explained by Meyer-Lübke (French Trans., III, 50-51) as a remnant of the Ablative case, similar to *escient*, *merci*, *mal gre*, etc.

Mes je l'aim mout, foi que vous doi, Guil. d'A., 2503.—*Dous amis, foi que je vous doi*, *La chose vint tot autrement*, Escoufle, 5850.—*foi que devez le roi . . . Comandez li*, Ch. Lyon., 128.—*Nenin, Foy que doy a Dieu*, Rec. de Farces, Mor., etc., I, 17, 6.—*Alons, foy que tu doiz a Dieu*, Mir. de N.-D., XXXIII, 1468.

From the fourteenth century on we begin to find in common use asseverative and adjurative phrases without introductory prepositions, which, judging from their relatively late appearance and from the manner of their employment, seem undoubtedly to have been abbreviated from the full forms with prepositions:

¹⁵ See, however, *En nom du haut Roi glorieux . . . Sui de mol croizier curieux*, Ruteb., I, 159, and *Ou nom de Dieu . . . a li iray*, Mir. de N.-D., XXI, 220.

Oil, nom Dieu, Mir. de N.-D., xxxiii, 1444.—*la vertu bieu, je meurs de duel*, Rec. de Poés. Fr., xiii, 34.—*Elle est, s'escria Panurge, par la vertu dieu, rumpue*, Rab., iii, 170.—*Vertus Dieu, i'ay eu du pasetemps*, Rab., ii, 297.—*La chair bieu, vous aurez des coups*, Th. Fr. av. la Ren., 128.—*le corps bien, je ne feray rien*, Rec. de Farces, 9.—*Les dens Dieu, c'est ung apostat*, Rec. Gén. Sot., ii, 189.—*Mon serment, j'en croy le libraire, Il m'a cousté*, Th. Fr. av. la Ren., 371.

Confusion of asseverative and adjurative forms with *par* and *pour*.

In the published editions I have examined it is not uncommon to find asseverative forms in adjurative function and vice versa. In most cases this has seemed to me to be due to an error on the part of the editor or the scribe. The similarity of manuscript writings for *par* and *pour* would lead easily to such mistakes. In a great many cases a change in the punctuation will reproduce the normal construction.

In not a few cases the apparent confusion of *par* and *pour* phrases may be explained by ascribing to these expressions an interjectional value such as we have found they sometimes have:

Que diray-je, Par le corbieu? J'en faysoys ce que je vouloys, Rec. Poés. Fr., xiii, 26.—*Par Nostre Dame, voyés, en voecy une qui se pasme*, Rec. de Farces, Mor., etc., iv, 2, 18.—*Non? Pourquoi? Par sainte Marie, Pensez vous, se elle vous chastie Et corrige en temps et en lieu, Que ce soit pour mal*, Rec. de Farces., 5.—*Bien veigniez, par Dieu!*, Mir. N.-D., xxvii, 964.—*Voiz, dist il, par le saint cuer bu, Qui ainc mes vit tel menestrell?*, Fabl., i, 20.—*Or por les sainz de Beauliant! Respont Nobles en souriant, Renart, se tu dis verité, Dont sont il tout desherité*, Ren., xxiii, 201.

The University of North Carolina.
